

# Japanese Mythology: Hermeneutics on Scripture (Religion in Culture)

*Jun'ichi Isomae, Mukund Subramanian*  
audiobook / \*ebooks / Download PDF / ePub / DOC

RELIGION IN CULTURE: STUDIES IN SOCIAL CONTEST AND CONSTRUCTION

## Japanese Mythology

Hermaneutics on Scripture



Jun'ichi Isomae

[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#3038646 in Books Equinox Publishing 2014-08-16 2009-05-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.21 x .43 x 6.14l, .80 #File Name: 1845531833224 pages | File size: 64.Mb

**Jun'ichi Isomae, Mukund Subramanian : Japanese Mythology: Hermeneutics on Scripture (Religion in Culture)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Japanese Mythology: Hermeneutics on Scripture (Religion in Culture):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Hard to recommendBy AveryI own several Japanese books by

Junichi Isomae, but I find this English translation difficult to recommend. The reason is kind of uncomfortable to describe. It's not that the information is outright wrong, or that it's incomprehensible. Instead, and rather unfortunately for a book by a thinker whose methodological seriousness is apparent from his non-Kiki writings, the methodology here is insufficiently rigorous. The very title, *Japanese Mythology*, marks the beginning of the problem. Isomae is very assertive that he considers the early emperors of Japan legendary. Are they, then, part of the mythology? In what way are they mythological? The term myth did not exist in English until 1800 and Japanese until 1900. Although he devotes an entire chapter to unravelling the ideological interpretations of postwar thinkers, Isomae still fails to question many of the historical conclusions reached by modern interpreters. The story he is telling is one that can be read in many (Japanese-language) academic publications and it is remarkably boring in its lack of critical thought. Some examples: Kume Kunitake was suppressed by conservatives? But Shirayama Yoshitar has recently put forward that he was not suppressed by conservatives, but by other rationalists. Isomae does not touch on this. Tsuda Skichis obsession with the idea of imperial myth remains relevant today? But many historians have been moving past Tsuda. Isomae is completely silent about recent discussions of Tsuda, and simply puts him on a pedestal as if he discovered the final truth. There is a lot of good information here, but I cannot recommend this as a textbook on the subject, nor as an introduction to new readers on the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*. It would in fact be better to read more ideological works as long as you are aware of the ideology. Some notes on the English edition: (1) The translation is sufficient but not praiseworthy. (2) The cover of the book picks up stains very easily. I advise putting some sort of dust jacket over the cover. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Anthropology Student I like the book. It had more insight than most other books on Japanese Mythology.

Before the westernisation of Japan, mythological events were treated as national history. Two key documents have contributed to this history, both written over 1300 years ago: '*Kojiki*', the Tale of Old Age, and '*Nihonshoki*', the Chronicle of Japanese History. Both the Imperial Court and the general public searched for the origin of their identity in these documents, which took on the central and sacred role of scripture. Through the act of commentary and interpretation, the sacred books connected interpreters to their historical origins, authenticating where they came from, the emergence of the Japanese archipelago, and the uniqueness of the Japanese people. '*Japanese Mythology*' explores the nation's attraction to this act of historical grounding and the varying identities that emerged during different historical periods. The study reveals that, rather than having any clear and unified substance, Japanese mythology has always been the result of a nostalgic desire to retrieve historical origins.

"A landmark study. Its sweeping reassessment of the scriptural hermeneutics of the ancient founding myths of Japan and their continued appropriation, use and abuse, over the ages contributes to a new scholarly approach towards the redefinition of religion as an integral part of material and political culture. It will, no doubt, become a standard reference for years to come." - Hent de Vries, Johns Hopkins University "A highly readable and deeply intelligent book which will capture the attention of anyone with a critical interest in questions of myth, truth, history, power, scripture, and what it is to be human." - Brian Bocking, University College Cork About the Author Junichi Isomae is Associate Professor, International Research Center for Japanese Studies.